

News from Rep. Stephanie Herseth

For Immediate Release

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HERSETH TO VISIT GULF COAST THIS WEEKEND AS PART OF AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE DELEGATION

Will Tour Areas Hardest Hit by Recent Hurricanes To View Agriculture Losses, Port Facilities

October 14, 2005, Washington, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Stephanie Herseth will travel to the Gulf Coast this weekend with other members of the House Agriculture Committee to view damage and recovery efforts from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Herseth said, “The devastation caused by recent hurricanes in the Gulf region has had far-reaching effects across our entire country, and I am particularly concerned about the effect it will have on our agriculture economy. The port in New Orleans is a crucial hub for our grain trade. I am hopeful this opportunity to view the damage and recovery efforts will be beneficial not only in crafting policy to handle natural disasters in the future, but to help with the continuing needs from Hurricanes Rita and Katrina.”

Preliminary estimates by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) attribute \$882 million in total crop, livestock and aquaculture losses to Hurricane Katrina. The delegation plans to visit the port facilities, view crop and livestock loss, and examine food distribution at food banks.

Herseth also hopes to meet with South Dakota National Guard members during the visit. Currently, 213 members of the South Dakota National Guard are in the Gulf Region helping with recovery efforts.

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Congresswoman Stephanie Herseth serves South Dakota in the U.S. House of Representatives. She is a member of the Blue Dog Coalition, a group of moderate Democrats committed to fiscal discipline and strong national security, and is co-chair of the Rural Working Group, which is dedicated to raising the profile of issues important to rural America. She also serves on three committees vital to South Dakota's interests: Agriculture, Veterans' Affairs and Resources.